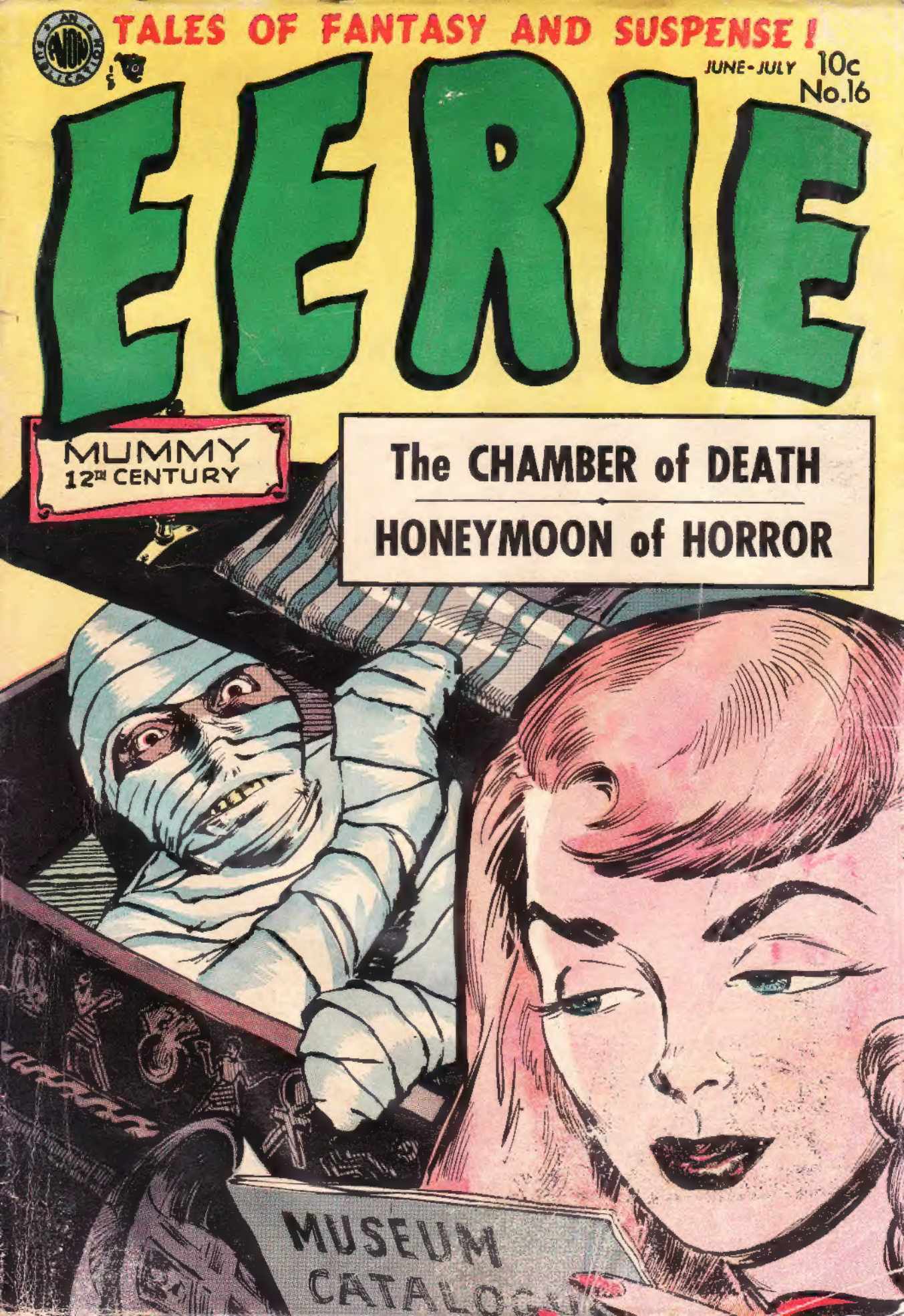
TALES OF FANTASY AND SUSPENSE!
JUNE-JULY 10c
No.16
EERIE
MUMMY
12TH CENTURY
The CHAMBER of DEATH
HONEYMOON of HORROR
MUSEUM

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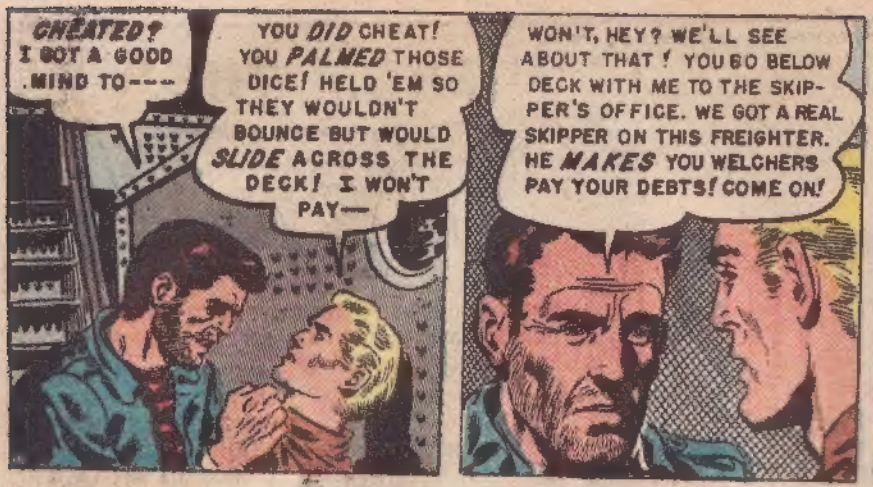
THE THING FROM THE SEA!

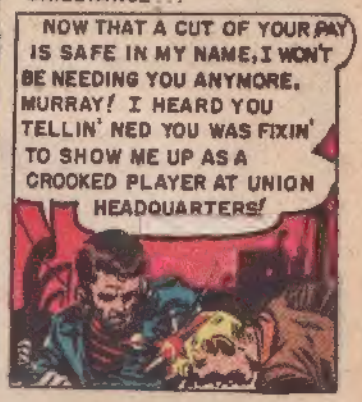
ON BOARD THE FREIGHT STEAMER HAVANA, UNDER THE SHADOW OF A LIFEBOAT, THREE SAILORS TOSS DICE...
MISSED AGAIN!
HAW! HAW! THAT'S THE FIFTH STRAIGHT PASS I'VE WON! GIMME THEM DICE. I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO MAKE 'EM HOLLER UNCLE!
SEVEN! WHAT'D I TELL YA? I CAN'T LOSE TODAY! THAT MAKES OVER HALF YOUR PAY FOR THIS CRUISE THAT I'VE WON! AM I GOING TO HAVE A TIME FOR MYSELF WHEN THIS BOAT DOCKS IN LI'L OLE NEW YORK? I'LL SAY I AM!
SMITHERS, YOU'LL GET NONE OF MY MONEY! YOU CHEATED!

IT CAME UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE *OCEAN*, A ROTTING *SOMETHING* FROM WHICH THE FLESH SLOUGHED OFF AS IT WALKED. THE HOLLOWS, WHERE ITS EYES HAD GLARED OUT AT THE WORLD...AS IF ETERNALLY SEEKING SOMEONE. AS IT WALKED, PAST THE ANCIENT WRECKS, AND THE FISH THAT PLAYED IN THEM, ITS HANDS REACHED OUT, *CLAWING*, AS THOUGH TO REACH THE MAN IT WANTED.

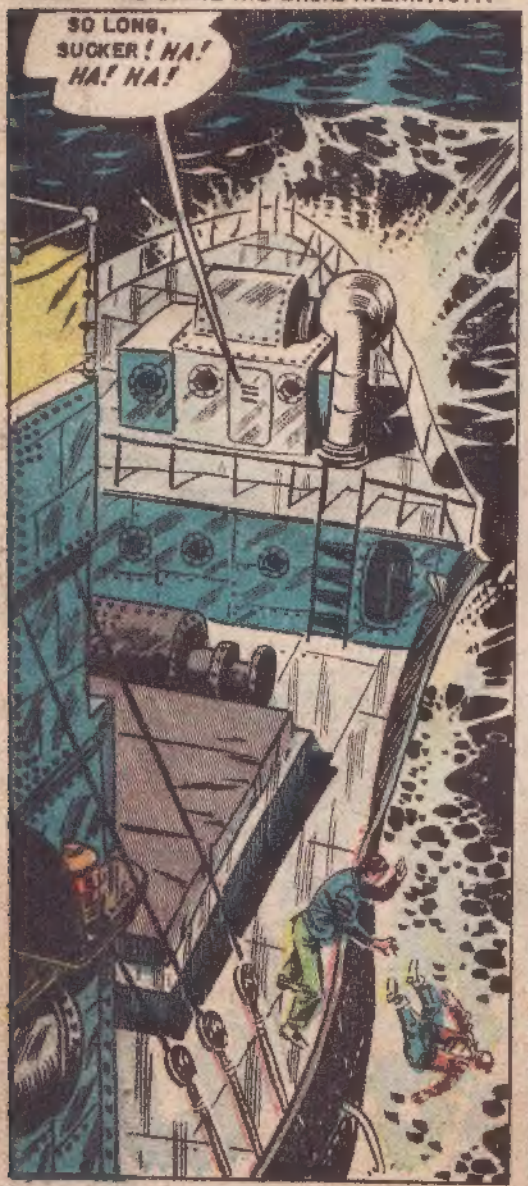
AND IN THE REALM OF THE LIVING, ABLE SEAMAN JOHNNY SMITHERS LAUGHED AND LOVED, *NEVER* DREAMING THAT DESTINY WAS COMING HIS WAY ON *DEAD FEET*. NO NEED FOR HIM TO WORRY...OR *WAS THERE?*


CHEATED? I GOT A GOOD MIND TO----
YOU DID CHEAT! YOU PALMED THOSE DICE! HELD 'EM SO THEY WOULDN'T BOUNCE BUT WOULD SLIDE ACROSS THE DECK! I WON'T PAY—
WON'T, HEY? WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! YOU GO BELOW DECK WITH ME TO THE SKIPPER'S OFFICE. WE GOT A REAL SKIPPER ON THIS FREIGHTER. HE MAKES YOU WELCHERS PAY YOUR DEBTS! COME ON!

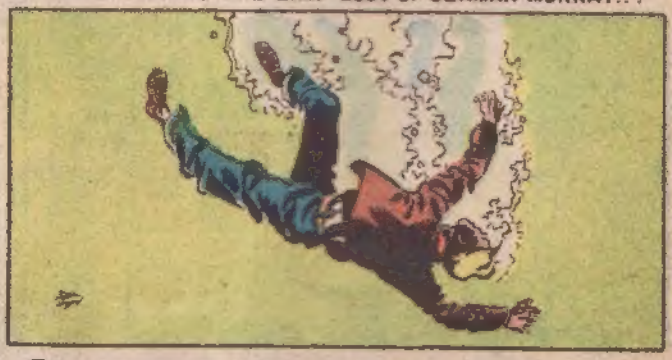
THAT NIGHT AS THE MOON BATHED THE DECKS IN BRILLIANCE...


NOW THAT A CUT OF YOUR PAY IS SAFE IN MY NAME, I WON'T BE NEEDING YOU ANYMORE, MURRAY! I HEARD YOU TELLIN' NED YOU WAS FIXIN' TO SHOW ME UP AS A CROOKED PLAYER AT UNION HEADQUARTERS!

A BLUNT THUD IN THE NIGHT! A HEAVE OF POWERFUL SHOULDERS AND SEAMAN EDDIE MURRAY GOES HURTLING OVER THE SHIP'S SIDE—HIS GRAVE THE BROAD ATLANTIC...



DOWN THROUGH THE COLD DEPTHS OF THE GREEN-GREY WATER SLIDES THE LIMP BODY OF SEAMAN MURRAY...



FOR A LITTLE WHILE A STREAM OF BUBBLES RISES FROM HIS MOUTH. AND AFTER A TIME, THEY STOP...

SLOWLY THE DEAD MAN SETTLES INTO THE OOZE AND MUD OF THE OCEAN'S FLOOR. HIS EYES OPEN TO STARE SIGHTLESSLY. HE STIRS—AND LIFTS AN ARM...

EDDIE MURRAY! YOU ARE DEAD. YOU WERE KILLED BY JOHNNY SMITHERS! REMEMBER? NO..YOU WOULDN'T REMEMBER. YOU DIDN'T SEE IT HAPPEN...
WHERE AM I? IS THIS WATER ALL AROUND ME? I'M NOT BREATHING... BUT I FEEL STRONG. AND THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO DO!
FISH NIBBLING AT MY FLESH... BUT I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING. JUST WANT TO WALK... UNTIL I FIND...WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR...
WHILE THE WALKING HORROR STALKS THE OCEAN BOTTOM, THE HAVANA DOCKS IN NEW YORK...
HE'S ON BOARD. I GOT HIS TELEGRAM WHEN THEY LEFT RIO. OH, EDDIE, IT'S BEEN SO LONG!
DO YOU KNOW A SEAMAN MURRAY? I'M HIS GIRL FRIEND. WE'RE GOING TO GET MARRIED...
SURE, I KNOW HIM. HE GOT DRUNK ONE NIGHT AND FELL OVERBOARD! HMMM.... DIDN'T KNOW HE HAD SUCH GOOD TASTE!
O-OVERBOARD...? SOB POOR EDDIE... OH, MY POOR DARLING!
NO SENSE CRYIN' OVER WHAT'S HAPPENED! COME ALONG WITH ME AND I'LL—TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT!
EDDIE WAS A SWELL GUY. ONLY ONE TROUBLE— HE COULDN'T SHOOT DICE. MATTER OF FACT, IT WAS BECAUSE HE LOST SO MUCH MONEY THAT HE —FELL OVERBOARD!
HE WAS TRYING TO WIN MONEY SO WE COULD GET MARRIED!
MOVING SLOWLY PAST THE WRECK OF A LONG SUNKEN SHIP, FEET SLOGGING IN THE MUD, A THING THAT ONCE WAS HUMAN STALKS FORWARD..
HE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE...THE MAN WHO SENT ME DOWN HERE! I WONDER HOW HE'D LIKE TO WALK FOREVER ALONG THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN....WITH ME!

JOHNNY SMITHERS AND HELEN JONES SOON FORGET EDDIE MURRAY. IT IS TOO MUCH FUN BEING ALIVE...

I-I'D KIND OF FORGOTTEN THERE WERE SUCH THINGS AS LAUGHTER... POOR EDDIE! I WONDER WHERE HE IS TONIGHT?
FORGET HIM, WILL YA! YOU GIVE ME THE CREEPS...!

SOME HOURS LATER, AS JOHNNY TOSSES IN BED, HE HEARS A VOICE CALLING... JOOOOHNNY... JOHNNNY SMIIITHERS... CAN YOU HEAR MEEEE? I AM CALLING TO YOU...

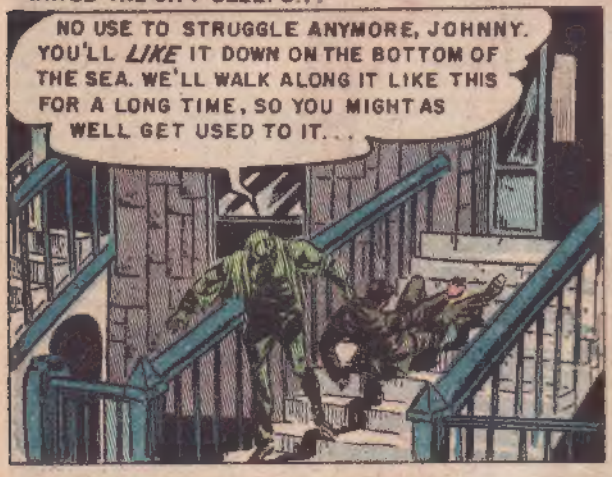
I'M COMING FOR YOU, JOOOHNY! I'M LONELY DOWN ON THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN!
NO! GO AWAY... YOU'RE DEAD! YOU'RE ROTTING AWAY! YOU AREN'T ALIVE...
AAAAAGHHH! GET AWAY... AGHHH! NO... NO! I DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN THERE... NOT WITH YOU... AAAAGGHH!

A NIGHTMARE! SURE, THAT'S WHAT IT WAS! I'VE HAD 'EM BEFORE... BUT NEVER SO REAL AS THIS!
WHAT A SAP I AM TO GET DRESSED AND COME WAY DOWN HERE TO THE DOCKS TO SEE IF... IF MY DREAM WOULD COME TRUE!
GUESS I'M JUST PLAIN STUPID! BUT THAT DREAM WAS SO REAL! I COULD FEEL HIS ROTTING HANDS! AND THOSE AWFUL, STARING EYES...
THE WATER IS ALL GONE. I'M STANDING HERE IN THE AIR. I'M ON A DOCK. SOMEWHERE OUT THERE I'LL FIND HIM...
JOHNNY... I'M COMING! WAIT FOR MEEEEE... I CAN'T WALK VERY FAST, JOHNNY, BECAUSE IF I GO FAST, A LOT OF ME WILL BREAK OFF AND FALL...
AHEAD OF THE ROTTING, BLOATED HORROR...
JOHNNY! OHH, YOU SCARED ME. WHY, IT'S ALMOST MORNING. HAVEN'T YOU BEEN TO BED?
I COULDN'T SLEEP! HELEN—MARRY ME! COME AWAY WITH ME. TO THE COUNTRY... OR SOMEWHERE! I--I DON'T WANT TO BE ANYWHERE NEAR THE SEA!
OF COURSE I WILL, DEAR. WHY, YOU'RE SHAKING. THERE, NOW. GIVE ME A FEW DAYS TO BUY SOME CLOTHES, AND WE'LL GO ON OUR HONEYMOON!
A FEW DAYS...? NO! NO, IT'S GOT TO BE NOW!
5

THIS MORNING? OH, I JUST COULDN'T, DARLING!
I HAVE PLENTY OF MONEY. MONEY I WON FROM—— FROM A FRIEND! PLEASE, HELEN!
I LOVE YOU, BABY! WE'LL TAKE A PLANE AND FLY FAR AWAY!
YES... YES, DEAR!
I'LL PACK RIGHT AWAY!
SWELL, I'LL MEET YOU AT CITY HALL!
GREAT HEAVENS! WHAT IN THE NAME OF... MY DREAM! MY DREAM!
GET AWAY FROM ME! GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM, YOU DEAD THING.
THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA IS COLD AND LONELY, JOHNNNNY. I WANT SOMEONE TO WALK WITH ME!
COME ALONG, JOHNNY! WE CAN GO ALL OVER THE WORLD, YOU AND I... HAND IN HAND... FOREVER!
6

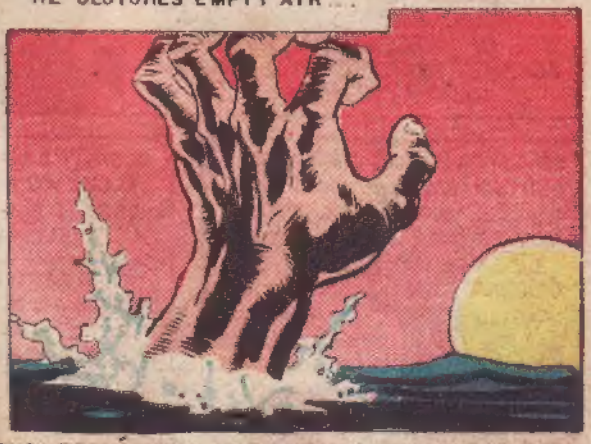
JOHNNY SMITHERS GOES MAD! THE FEEL OF THAT COLD AND SLIMY HAND, SENDS COLD SHUDDERS DOWN HIS SPINE...

IN THE EARLY DAWN OF A NEW YORK MORNING... WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS...


NO USE TO STRUGGLE ANYMORE, JOHNNY. YOU'LL LIKE IT DOWN ON THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA. WE'LL WALK ALONG IT LIKE THIS FOR A LONG TIME, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET USED TO IT...

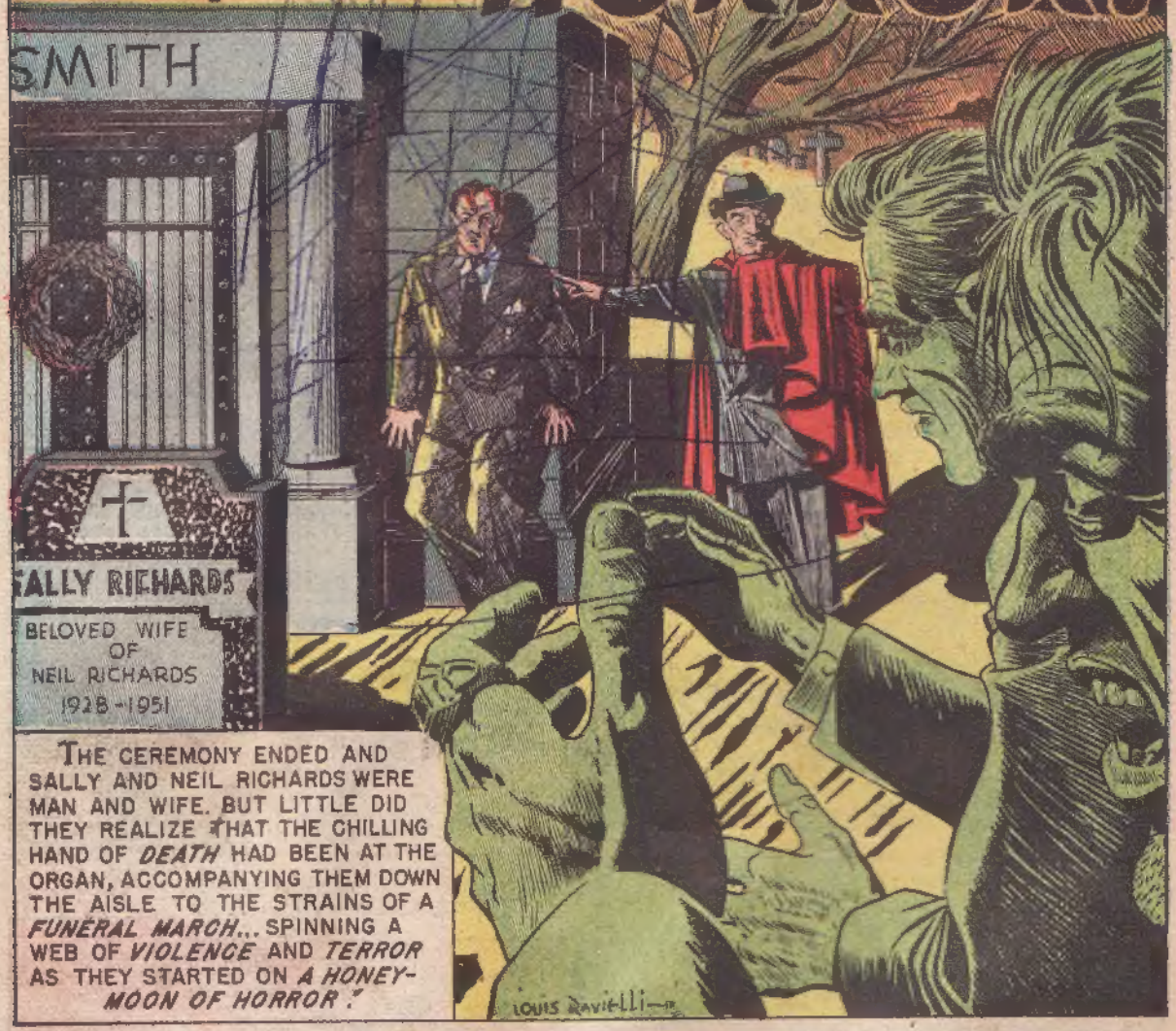
NO...NO...NO! I'LL GIVE YOU BACK YOUR MONEY... I WON'T SEE HELEN EVER AGAIN... JUST LET ME GO... LET ME GO...
I DON'T CARE ABOUT MONEY ANYMORE! I'VE FORGOTTEN HELEN, TOO! ALL I WANT IS YOU, JOHNNY... ON THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA!

JOHNNY'S SCREAM GURGLES IN HIS THROAT. HE CLUTCHES EMPTY AIR...



AND THEN THERE IS JUST EMPTY WATER, ROLLING ENDLESSLY OVER THE OCEAN FLOOR WHERE TWO MEN WALK, FOREVER...

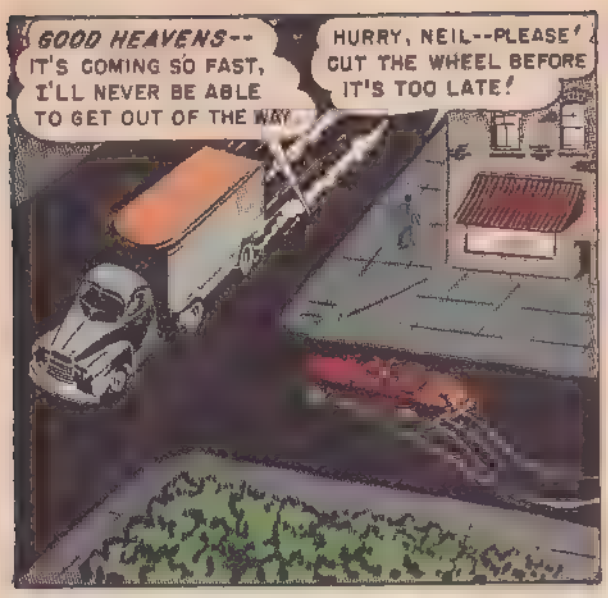
a honeymoon of HORROR!

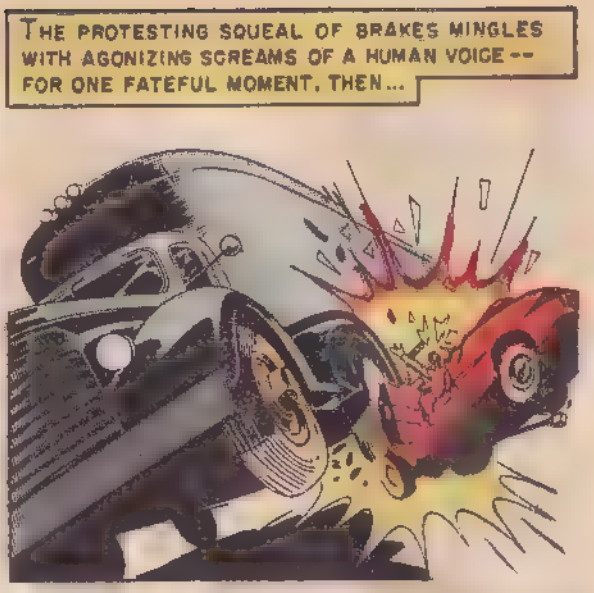

SMITH
ALLY RICHARDS
BELOVED WIFE OF NEIL RICHARDS
1928-1951
THE CEREMONY ENDED AND SALLY AND NEIL RICHARDS WERE MAN AND WIFE. BUT LITTLE DID THEY REALIZE THAT THE CHILLING HAND OF *DEATH* HAD BEEN AT THE ORGAN, ACCOMPANYING THEM DOWN THE AISLE TO THE STRAINS OF A *FUNERAL MARCH*... SPINNING A WEB OF *VIOLENCE* AND *TERROR* AS THEY STARTED ON *A HONEYMOON OF HORROR!*
LOUIS RAVIELLI

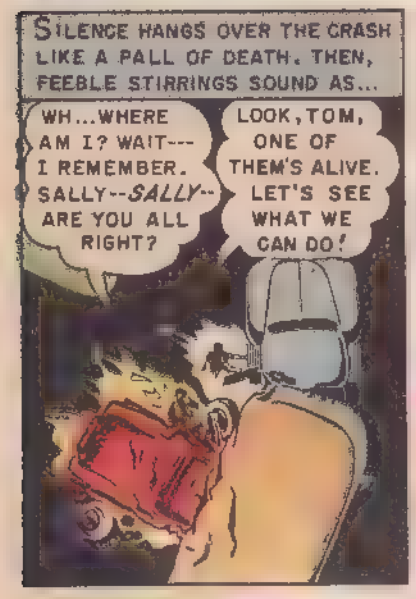
SO LONG, MOM AND DAD. SALLY, I'LL WRITE YOU AS SOON AS WE GET TO CENTRAL FALLS.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT US, SON. YOU KIDS HAVE FUN AND MAKE YOUR HONEYMOON SOMETHING TO REMEMBER. GOOD-BYE, MR. AND MRS. RICHARDS!
JUST MARRIED

GOSH, IT'S LIKE A DREAM, SALLY. YOU'RE MY WIFE AT LAST. I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT!
YOU'D BETTER, NEIL RICHARDS, BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I'M GOING TO BE FROM NOW ON -- 'TIL DEATH DO US PART!

BRR--DO YOU HAVE TO GET SO GRIM ABOUT IT? I'D RATHER TALK ABOUT MORE PLEASANT... WAIT--WHAT'S THAT?
NEIL, DARLING -- COMING OUT OF THAT SIDE STREET! *WATCH OUT!*





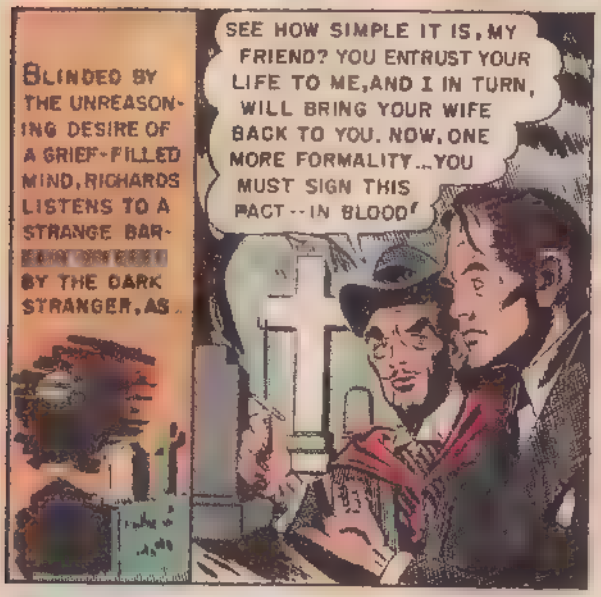

SILENCE HANGS OVER THE CRASH LIKE A PALL OF DEATH. THEN, FEEBLE STIRRINGS SOUND AS...
WH...WHERE AM I? WAIT--- I REMEMBER. SALLY--SALLY-- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
LOOK, TOM, ONE OF THEM'S ALIVE. LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO!

MY WIFE--SHE'S PINNED IN THERE. I'VE GOT TO GET TO HER. WE CAN'T LET HER DIE.
HOLD ON, BUD, YOU CAN'T MOVE THAT STUFF BY YOURSELF. I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND. WAIT--THERE'S NO NEED TO HURRY NOW.
JUST MARRIED

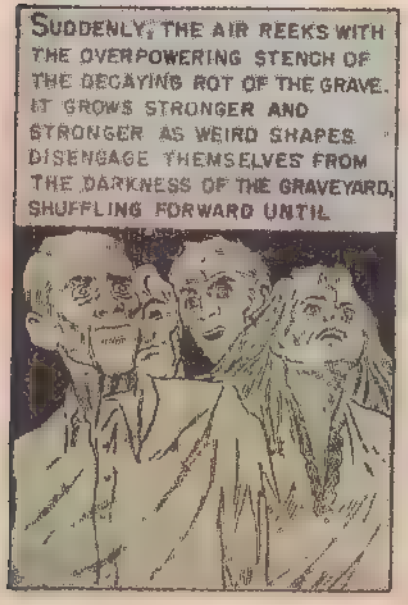
FOR DAYS, NEIL RICHARDS IS A MAN LIVING IN A SHADOW WORLD. HIS WIFE'S FUNERAL, BURIAL -- EVERYTHING IS LOST IN THE DIM HAZE OF A SORROW-CRUSHED MIND. ONLY ONE THING IS REAL-- *THE GRAVE*. AND DAY AFTER DAY, NEIL RE- [redacted] A MOURNFUL VIGIL, AS...

GOOD EVENING, MR. RICHARDS! I HOPE I HEARD YOU CORRECTLY! YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID?
CERTAINLY, I WAS, YOU FOOL! WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

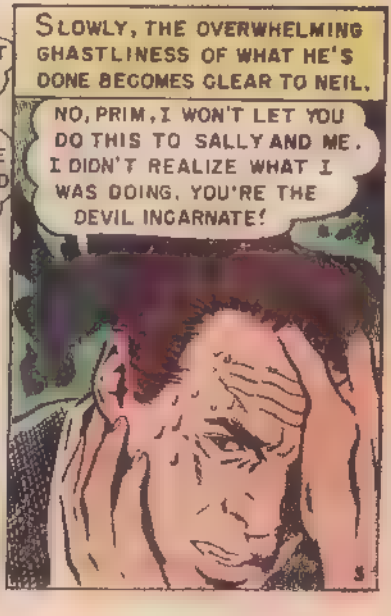
JUST CALL ME MR. PRIM--A FRIEND IN YOUR TIME OF NEED, RICHARDS. IT IS WITHIN MY POWER TO HELP YOU SEE YOUR BELOVED WIFE AGAIN.
WHAT? HOW CAN *YOU* DO THIS? TELL ME... QUICKLY!


BLINDED BY THE UNREASONING DESIRE OF A GRIEF-FILLED MIND, RICHARDS LISTENS TO A STRANGE BARGAIN OFFERED BY THE DARK STRANGER, AS
SEE HOW SIMPLE IT IS, MY FRIEND? YOU ENTRUST YOUR LIFE TO ME, AND I IN TURN, WILL BRING YOUR WIFE BACK TO YOU. NOW, ONE MORE FORMALITY...YOU MUST SIGN THIS PACT--IN BLOOD!

THERE...IT'S DONE! NOW WHERE'S SALLY? I MUST SEE MY WIFE!
PATIENCE, RICHARDS! FIRST I WANT YOU TO MEET MY HELPERS. THEY ARE PEOPLE, LIKE YOURSELF WHO HAVE MADE THE BARGAIN. COME FORWARD, FRIENDS!

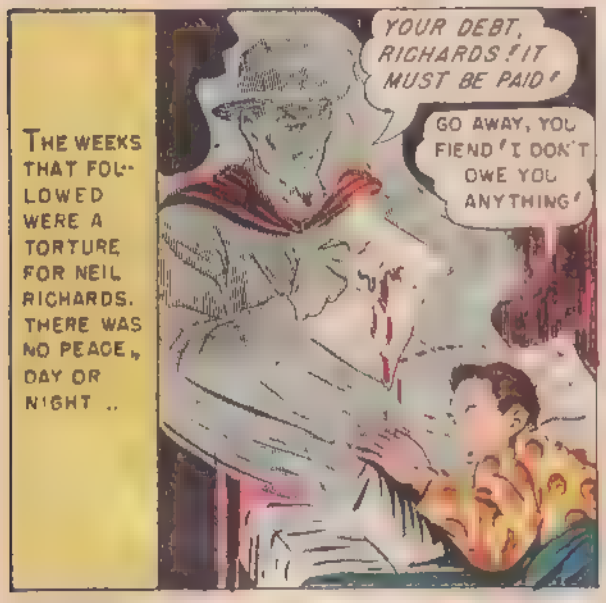

SUDDENLY, THE AIR REEKS WITH THE OVERPOWERING STENCH OF THE DECAYING ROT OF THE GRAVE. IT GROWS STRONGER AND STRONGER AS WEIRD SHAPES DISENGAGE THEMSELVES FROM THE DARKNESS OF THE GRAVEYARD, SHUFFLING FORWARD UNTIL

GOOD LORD--WHO ARE THESE HORRIBLE CREATURES, MR PRIM?
THEY, TOO, SIGNED THE PACT AND ARE UNITED IN DEATH WITH THEIR LOVED ONES. THEY'RE HERE TO WELCOME YOU AND YOUR WIFE AMONG THEM.


SLOWLY, THE OVERWHELMING GHASTLINESS OF WHAT HE'S DONE BECOMES CLEAR TO NEIL.
NO, PRIM, I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS TO SALLY AND ME. I DIDN'T REALIZE WHAT I WAS DOING. YOU'RE THE DEVIL INCARNATE!

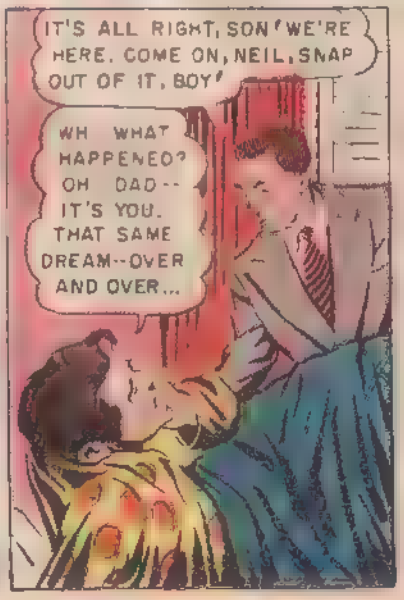
LOOK, MY FRIENDS! RICHARDS IS NOT HAPPY WITH HIS BARGAIN STOP HIM! WE'LL SOON MAKE HIM COOPERATIVE.
GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU UNHOLY THINGS! GET BACK TO THE GRAVE... WHERE YOU BELONG!

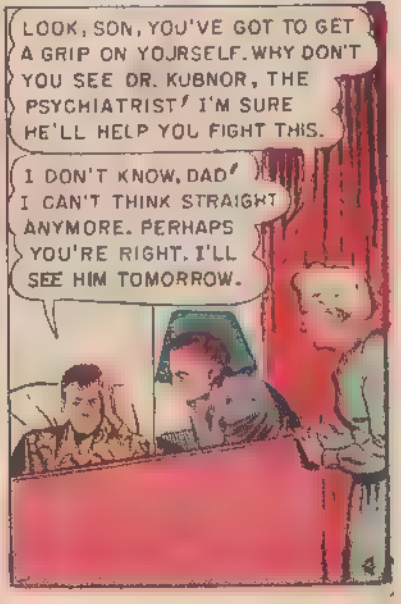
THERE--I'M FREE! I MUST GET AWAY FROM HERE.
RUN, YOU STUPID FOOL, BUT YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE MR. PRIM. WE'VE MADE A BARGAIN AND . I LL COLLECT. I ALWAYS DO IN THE END.

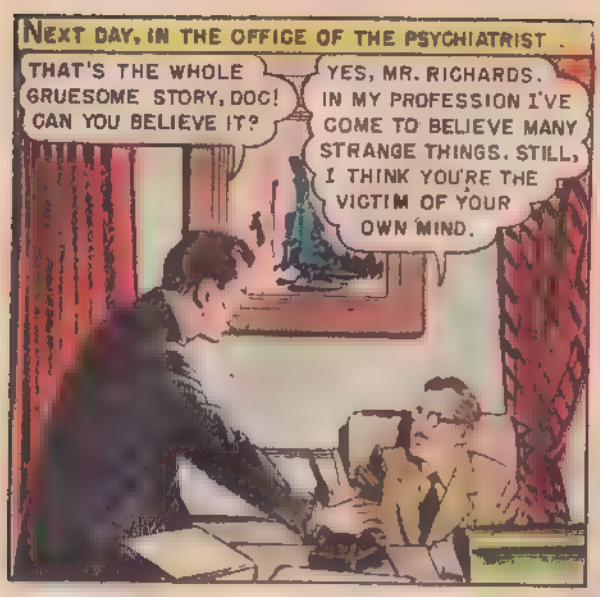

THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED WERE A TORTURE FOR NEIL RICHARDS. THERE WAS NO PEACE, DAY OR NIGHT ..
YOUR DEBT, RICHARDS! IT MUST BE PAID!
GO AWAY, YOU FIEND! I DON'T OWE YOU ANYTHING!

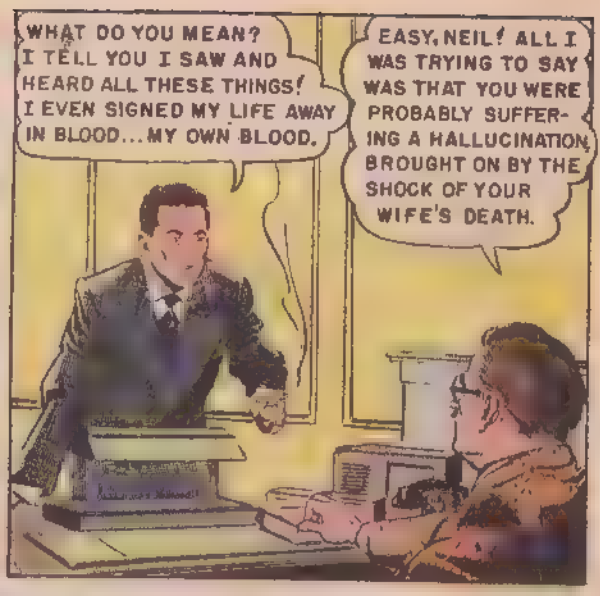
DON'T TOUCH ME . DON'T! HELP-- I'M LOST!

THEY'RE KILLING ME! AARGH!
POOR NEIL! HE'S HAVING THAT SAME NIGHTMARE AGAIN. WE'VE GOT TO HELP HIM...SOMEHOW!

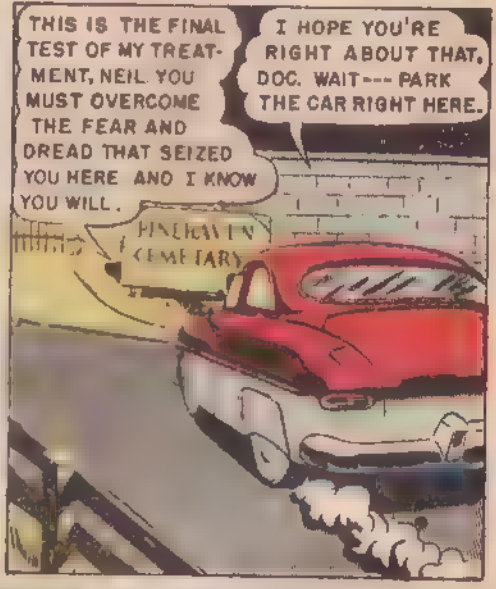

IT'S ALL RIGHT, SON! WE'RE HERE. COME ON, NEIL, SNAP OUT OF IT, BOY!
WH WHAT HAPPENED? OH DAD-- IT'S YOU. THAT SAME DREAM--OVER AND OVER...

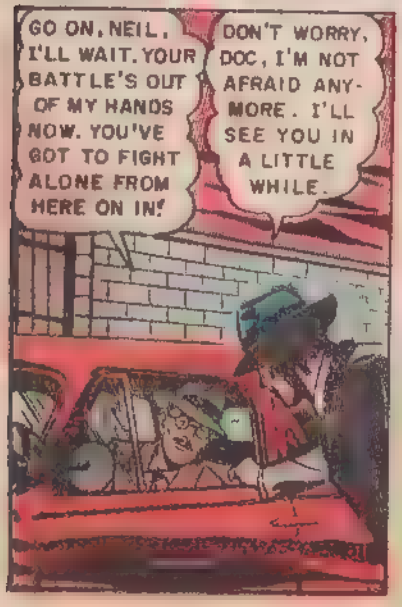

LOOK, SON, YOU'VE GOT TO GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF. WHY DON'T YOU SEE DR. KUBNOR, THE PSYCHIATRIST! I'M SURE HE'LL HELP YOU FIGHT THIS.
I DON'T KNOW, DAD! I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT ANYMORE. PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL SEE HIM TOMORROW.


NEXT DAY, IN THE OFFICE OF THE PSYCHIATRIST .
THAT'S THE WHOLE GRUESOME STORY, DOC! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
YES, MR. RICHARDS. IN MY PROFESSION I'VE COME TO BELIEVE MANY STRANGE THINGS. STILL, I THINK YOU'RE THE VICTIM OF YOUR OWN MIND.


WHAT DO YOU MEAN? I TELL YOU I SAW AND HEARD ALL THESE THINGS! I EVEN SIGNED MY LIFE AWAY IN BLOOD... MY OWN BLOOD.
EASY, NEIL! ALL I WAS TRYING TO SAY WAS THAT YOU WERE PROBABLY SUFFERING A HALLUCINATION, BROUGHT ON BY THE SHOCK OF YOUR WIFE'S DEATH.

SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY, UNDER THE EXPERT CARE OF DOCTOR KUBNOR, NEIL RICHARDS BEGINS TO FIND HIS WAY BACK TO THE WORLD OF REALITY AND SANITY THEN ONE DARK NIGHT, WEEKS LATER...


THIS IS THE FINAL TEST OF MY TREATMENT, NEIL. YOU MUST OVERCOME THE FEAR AND DREAD THAT SEIZED YOU HERE AND I KNOW YOU WILL.
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT, DOC. WAIT--- PARK THE CAR RIGHT HERE.
PINEHAVEN CEMETARY


GO ON, NEIL, I'LL WAIT. YOUR BATTLE'S OUT OF MY HANDS NOW. YOU'VE GOT TO FIGHT ALONE FROM HERE ON IN!
DON'T WORRY, DOC, I'M NOT AFRAID ANYMORE. I'LL SEE YOU IN A LITTLE WHILE.

STOP IT--YOU DON'T EXIST! YOU'RE JUST A PHANTOM OF MY IMAGINATION. GO AWAY!
DON'T BE A FOOL, RICHARDS! TONIGHT I HAVE A LOVELY SURPRISE FOR YOU. LOOK, MY FRIEND!
IT...IT'S SALLY! YOU FILTHY BEAST--YOU'VE MADE HER ONE OF YOUR DEVIL'S-SPAWN!
QUITE THE CONTRARY, MY DEAR RICHARDS. YOU DID. I HAVE YOUR SIGNATURE TO PROVE IT, TOO BUT, WE WASTE PRECIOUS TIME TALKING. THE MOMENT HAS COME FOR YOU TO JOIN YOUR BRIDE. TAKE HIM, MY FRIENDS!
AT THE COMMAND OF THEIR MASTER, THE UNCLEAN DWELLERS OF THE GROUND CREEP CLOSER AND CLOSER TO NEIL RICHARDS. SUDDENLY...
AARGH--DR. KUBNOR--HELP ME! HELP!
AS OUTSIDE THE CEMETERY...
I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE TOUGH ON THE BOY, BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO CURE HIS FEARS. I HOPE HE'S WAIT--THAT SCREAM! IT'S NEIL!
I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM...AND QUICKLY! I'VE NEVER HEARD A HUMAN VOICE SO ANGUISHED. WHAT'S THAT UP AHEAD?
GOOD HEAVENS... THOSE HIDEOUS, MISSHAPEN THINGS. THEY SEEM TO BE CARRYING OFF SOMEONE. IT'S TOO DARK... I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING CLEARLY.
6

THEY'RE INHUMAN-- NO MAN COULD HAVE DREAMED OF THESE BEINGS. FIGHT THEM, NEIL, I'M COMING!
BUT AS THE DOCTOR HASTENS TO AID HIS STRUGGLING FRIEND, HIS FOOT SINKS INTO THE SLIME OF A GRAVE, AND...
OOH!
NOW ONLY THE DISMAL MOANING OF THE WIND IN THE TREES BREAKS THE HUSH OF THE DEAD. SOMETIME LATER...
OHH... MY HEAD--- WAIT, I MUST FIND THE BOY! NEIL... NEIL... WHERE ARE YOU?
THERE'S HIS WIFE'S GRAVE! GOOD LORD--- THOSE FOOTPRINTS COULD ONLY BE HIS! THEY GO RIGHT TO THE EDGE OF THE GRAVE AND DISAPPEAR!
HE'S JOINED HIS WIFE AT LAST! WHAT AM I SAYING? I'M A DOCTOR... THIS IS MADNESS. I MUST GET HELP. STILL WHO'S GOING TO LISTEN TO ME WHEN I TELL THIS STORY?
STUMBLING THROUGH THE CEMETERY, DR. KUBNOR ARRIVES AT THE CARETAKER'S HOUSE. IN A FRENZY, HE SHOUTS AND BANGS ON THE DOOR.
THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE IN. I NEED YOUR HELP--- DESPERATELY!
MY, MY... SUCH NOISE! WELL, WHAT IS IT, MY FRIEND?
I'LL SAY YOU DO. YOU LOOK AS THOUGH YOU'VE JUST SEEN A GHOST! COME IN, AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU!
THE END

The CHAMBER of DEATH!

THE THING that I am about to relate happened to me on what was to be the first and last day of my service as a rookie policeman. It also accounts for my decision to leave the force the next day, as well as to leave that cursed city as well. I have never spoken of it for fear of my sanity being questioned, but I am now writing it for the record.

I had been assigned to the outskirts of the city; a lonely beat that ran alongside the cemetery which borders the city line. Being the newest man at the precinct, I drew the worst hours and the loneliest beat—the hours immediately after midnight, and the walk along and through the cemetery.

It was a moonless night and cold. I started walking my beat at midnight with the discordant ringing of the cracked bell at the cemetery chapel gonging out the hour. There was no one in sight, not even a keeper at the gates. I walked along the picket fence at the graveyard's edge, through the rusty gates, and along the overgrown path through the center of the cemetery.

We had to patrol there, for several ugly crimes had occurred in that deserted spot. The cemetery was very old, much of it had long gone to rot and decay; rumor had it that the first settlers had placed it on the site of an old Indian, and possibly pre-Indian graveyard, that had been there for centuries before the Pilgrims came to this part of New England. I walked, my shoes echoing emptily against the lonely ground. Tombstones leaned at crazy angles, white and grey, in the night; an occasional weather-streaked and neglected mausoleum shone whitely amid the weeds as my searchlight played over it. I saw no one.

Then I noticed a light. An eerily swaying, flickering, greenish light, moving somewhere over in the darkest and oldest part of the cemetery. I stopped and watched it, then started silently across the graves towards it. I wanted to seize whoever the intruder was, and I didn't want to warn them of my presence.

It seemed to be moving around an old mausoleum, and as I drew closer, it seemed to disappear inside the tomb! I reached the spot seconds afterwards. The light was gone, but the ancient crumbling stone vault had been opened—for its greenish bronze door was ajar.

I grabbed the edge of the door, swung it silently open. I saw before me that instead of the inside of a tomb, there was a flight of stone steps—going down into the subterranean depths! Into the areas below the graveyard. Down, disappearing on those steps, was that flickering, weird light!

I followed, closing the door, but not allowing it to shut altogether. I was in total darkness save for that eerie glimmer, swaying down the stone steps far below me!

Down the stairs I went, silently, guided by that ghostly light. I must have descended several hundred steps, far below the ground, far below the level of the city, when at last the steps ended on the floor of an old abandoned sewer.

The floor of the sewer, unknown to the city, was ankle deep in stinking, stagnant water—seepage from the worm-rotten earth above. Before me, in that passage beneath the graveyard, the greenish light was bob-

bing, and now I saw that there were two such lights!

I followed them as silently as I could. All about me there was darkness and damp, about my feet the cold vile water slushed. The rotting brick walls were slimy to the touch. The squeak of rats and the swish of their loathsome bodies in the water came to me. Then, somehow, I had come around a bend and found that I had taken some sort of short cut, for the bearers of the lights were passing directly before me.

What I saw I shall never forget. The thing, the awful thing that led—for there were three figures in single file—was a creature of sheer nightmare, a product of Satan's nethermost hell! It was huge, seven or eight feet, and its head was a bare and grinning skull. Rags covered its huge bony frame—moldy corpse rags—and it leaned upon a bone for support that could have come from no monster that ever walked this earth! Cackling upon its shoulder, chained there, was a vile batlike thing with rubbery wings and a monkey's face. The skeleton monster carried a lantern, a flickering green flame within it, and a chain from that hand swung back to connect with the wrist of . . . a girl.

She walked directly behind the skeleton, and she stared before her without expression. Her eyes were stunned with horror, her hair fell in disarray about her shoulders, she walked in bare feet through the dirty water, and there was something about her features that made me think I knew her. But I could not seem to remember where I had seen her. The chain on her wrist continued on to end in the hand of an old and bearded man who walked last in line, carrying another lantern. His lined and timelessly evil face looked like that of Father Time.

The three passed without noticing me. I followed slowly after them, in a daze of horror, my mind reeling as I tried to figure out the meaning of it all. From time to time, I noticed the skeletons that lay on the tunnel floor, the batlike monsters that squawked and yammered as the trio passed —then ahead at last I saw that the tunnel came to an end in a haze of sullen red light.

I watched them grow closer to that tunnel's end, and I saw that it was the opening of some sort of great chamber, an area lit with a red flickering glow, like some giant oven. They vanished across the threshhold and to that spot I myself staggered until at last I stood at the very end of the tunnel passage and gazed into the hidden underground chamber.

It was a cavern that seemed to have no end, that seemed to go down and down into the very bowels of the earth. Red fires danced through it and the shapes of horrible beings leered and did unspeakable things within it. I cannot describe it—no description could do it justice.

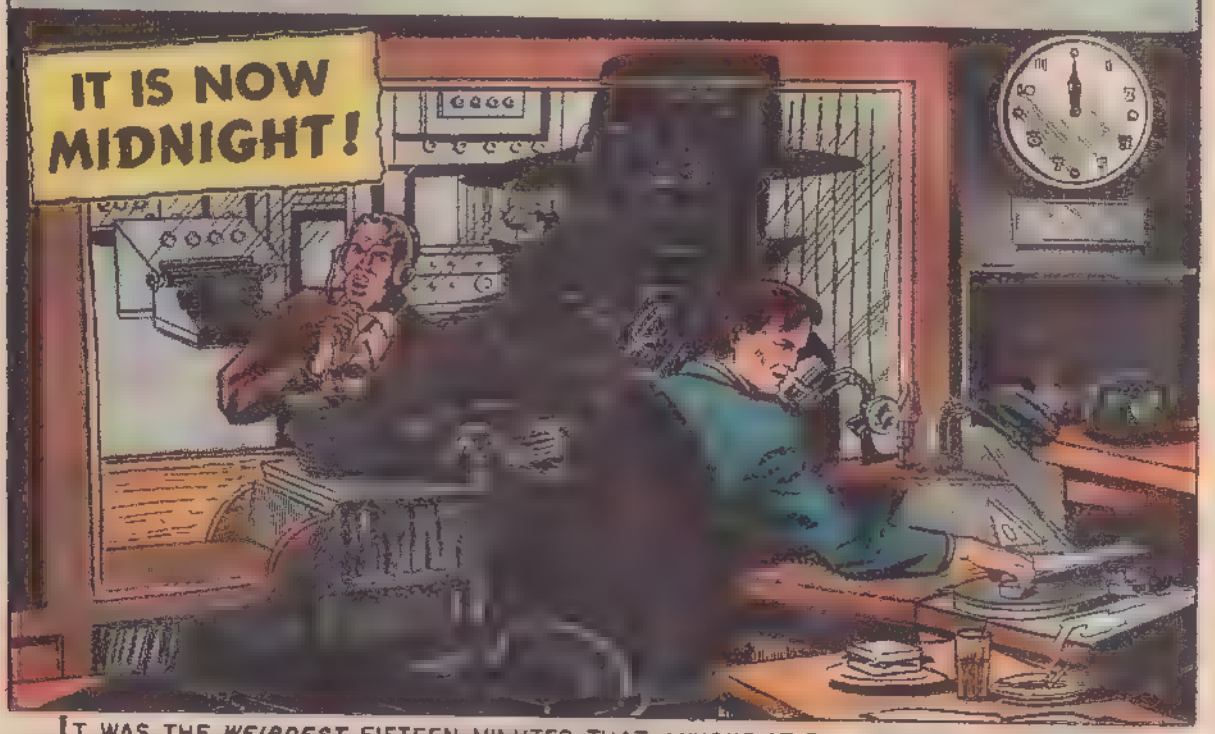
I fled then; I fled wildly, madly, in an insane frenzy. I ran through the sewer, retracing my path, the bat-things screaming at me and flapping rubberly around me, the skeletons cracking beneath my flying feet. Somehow I found my way back, somehow I clambered up those hundreds of time-worn stairs, reached the door of the old tomb, slammed it shut, and fled screaming from the cemetery, back to the lamp-lit streets of the sleeping city.

For I knew where I had been. I had at last remembered where I had seen that girl. It had been her face I had seen in the papers that very day, sullen and unrepentant. It had been she, the murderess who had slain her family in cold blood, who had gone to the gallows that very night, who had been hung by the state for foul murder, and consigned for her evil to everlasting damnation.

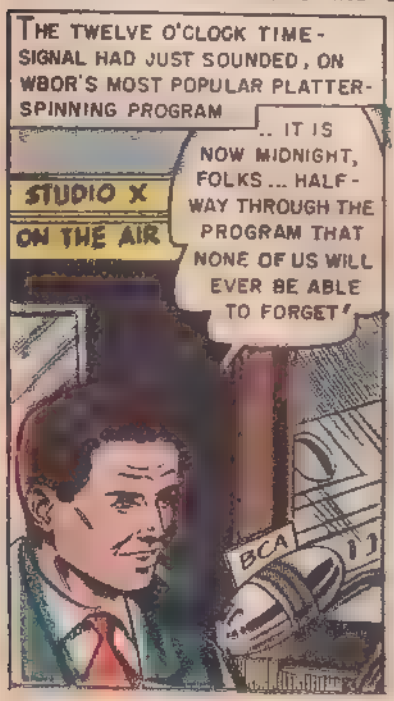
It was she that the demons had taken. It was her cursed soul that had marched in chains through the ancient cemetery and down into the haunted ground under the guard of Satan's own messengers—and it was to the very gates of Hell itself I had followed her, and I had looked for one ghastly moment into that crimson-flamed chamber.

THE END

THE STRANGER IN STUDIO X!

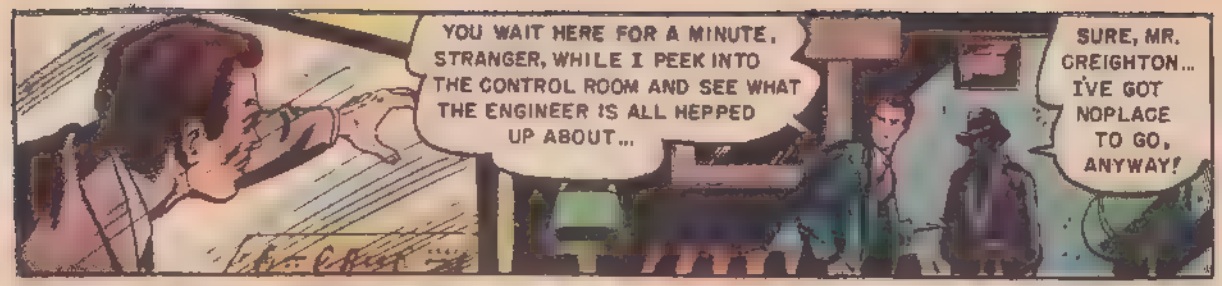


IT WAS THE *WEIRDEST* FIFTEEN MINUTES THAT *ANYONE* AT RADIO STATION WBOR EVER REMEMBERED. THE *SPINE TINGLING* SERIES OF MISADVENTURES, WHICH MADE THAT NIGHT SO MEMORABLE, BEGAN EXACTLY AT *MIDNIGHT*, ON AN OTHERWISE ROUTINE EVENING AND THERE WERE THOSE WHO SAW IN THE OCCURRENCES OF THE NEXT QUARTER HOUR THE SORT OF EERIE PUZZLE TO WHICH *NO* MAN WOULD EVER FIND AN ANSWER. THOSE NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN MOMENTS OF *BEWILDERMENT* AND *FEAR* STARTED IN THE MIDDLE OF DAWN CREIGHTON'S POPULAR DISC JOCKEY PROGRAM... STARTED, IN FACT, AT THE VERY MOMENT THE DOOR TO CREIGHTON'S BROADCASTING BOOTH OPENED, AND IN WALKED... "*THE STRANGER IN STUDIO X!*"

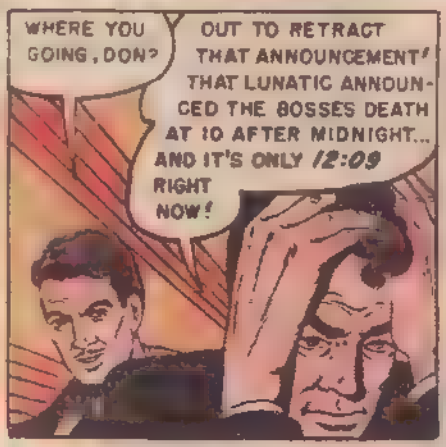

THE TWELVE O'CLOCK TIME-SIGNAL HAD JUST SOUNDED, ON WBOR'S MOST POPULAR PLATTER-SPINNING PROGRAM
STUDIO X
ON THE AIR
.. IT IS NOW MIDNIGHT, FOLKS ... HALF-WAY THROUGH THE PROGRAM THAT NONE OF US WILL EVER BE ABLE TO FORGET!
BCA

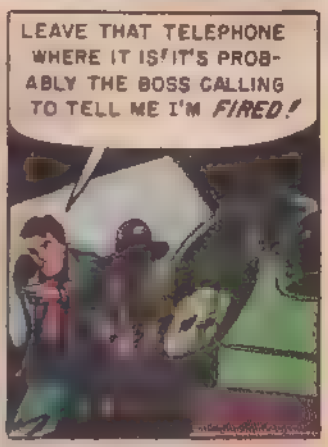
LET'S GET OUT OF RANGE OF THAT MIKE! HOW'D YOU HAPPEN TO BE WANDERING AROUND UP HERE, ANYWAY?
I JUST STEPPED OFF THE ELEVATOR AND THOUGHT I'D MOSEY AROUND. NO ONE WAS HERE TO STOP ME...
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, MISTER! THE GUARD ON THIS FLOOR IS MIKE ALLAN... AND HE NEVER LETS ANYONE WANDER AROUND! NO ONE GETS PAST MIKE..
M-MIKE ALLAN... W-WHY HE'S THE ONE...
..T-THE MAN WHO JUST DIED DOWN THE HALLWAY!
D-DIED? MIKE ALLAN..DEAD? I--I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT... HE'S BEEN AROUND HERE SINCE WBOR FIRST OPENED ITS DOORS! H-HE WAS THE FIRST FRIEND I HAD HERE...
L-LOOK..WHOEVER YOU ARE... STICK AROUND FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES, WILL YOU? I WANT TO SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP...THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR AN OLD PAL LIKE MIKE ALLAN!
QUEER! I SAW MIKE NOT MORE THAN AN HOUR AGO, WHEN HE GAVE ME HIS USUAL "TOP OF THE EVENIN', MR. CREIGHTON!" AND NOW...NOW POOR OLD MIKE'S GONE!
AND THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT THE WHOLE EPISODE IS THIS GHOULISH-LOOKING GUY WHO WANDERED INTO STUDIO X TO TELL ME ABOUT IT! THOSE GLASSES OF HIS...N-HEY! UP AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS.!

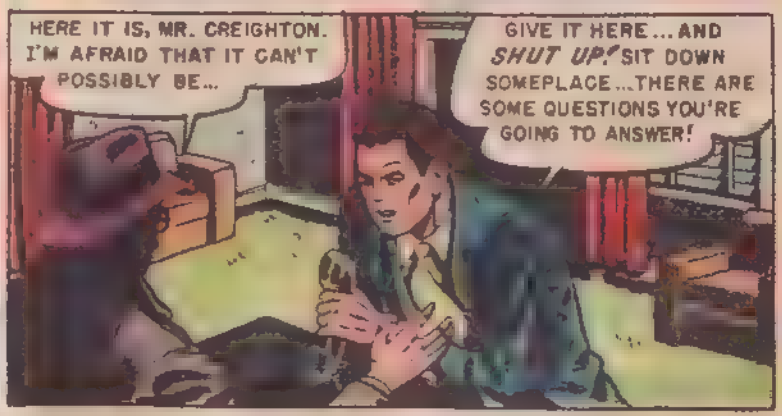
M-MIKE! MIKE ALLAN! I JUST HEARD THE CRAZIEST STORY ABOUT YOU, OLD-TIMER! SOME WEIRD CHARACTER SNEAKED INTO STUDIO X DURING MY BROADCAST AND TOLD ME THAT YOU...HEH, HEH...THIS'LL KILL YOU WHEN YOU HEAR IT...
I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN, SON... I'LL...
W-WATCH OUT, MIKE! THAT RUG!
NO...NO! IT CAN'T BE HAPPENING... LIKE A NIGHTMARE...!
THUD!
MIKE...DEAD! HIS NECK SNAPPED LIKE A TWIG ON THAT FALL DOWN THE STAIRS...NOW HE'S GONE, JUST LIKE THAT GHOUL IN STUDIO X SAID HE WOULD BE!
S-SAY! THAT GUY WITH THE FISHBOWL EYES KNEW ALL ABOUT MIKE BEING DEAD...EVEN BEFORE IT HAPPENED! IT...IT'S IMPOSSIBLE...IT'S THE MADDEST THING I EVER HEARD OF! IT COULDN'T HAPPEN...OR COULD IT?
I-I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO THE STUDIO BEFORE THAT STRANGER GETS AWAY! THERE ARE QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK HIM ..HE KNOWS... TOO MUCH!
I PUT ANOTHER RECORDING ON FOR YOU, MR. CREIGHTON... THEN THE TELEPHONE RANG... SOMEBODY WANTED YOU TO PLAY...
NEVER MIND THAT! SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON AROUND HERE... AND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CAN STRAIGHTEN ME OUT! MIKE ALLAN WAS ALIVE UNTIL A MINUTE AGO, YET YOU TOLD ME...


YOU WAIT HERE FOR A MINUTE, STRANGER, WHILE I PEEK INTO THE CONTROL ROOM AND SEE WHAT THE ENGINEER IS ALL HEPPED UP ABOUT...
SURE, MR. CREIGHTON... I'VE GOT NOPLACE TO GO, ANYWAY!

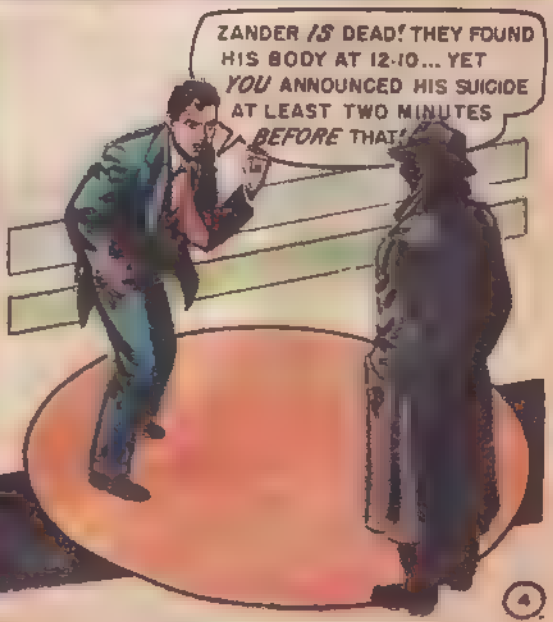
...AND I TELL YOU HE'S A MANIAC, DON! I WAS BUSY IN HERE WITH THE CONTROL PANEL AND COULDN'T STOP HIM FROM PICKING UP THE MIKE! BEFORE I KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING HE ANNOUNCED THAT MARTIN ZANDER, PRESIDENT OF STATION WBOR, HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE AT 10 MINUTES AFTER MIDNIGHT!
WHAT?


WHERE YOU GOING, DON?
OUT TO RETRACT THAT ANNOUNCEMENT! THAT LUNATIC ANNOUNCED THE BOSSES DEATH AT 10 AFTER MIDNIGHT... AND IT'S ONLY 12:09 RIGHT NOW!


LEAVE THAT TELEPHONE WHERE IT IS! IT'S PROBABLY THE BOSS CALLING TO TELL ME I'M FIRED!


HERE IT IS, MR. CREIGHTON. I'M AFRAID THAT IT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE...
GIVE IT HERE... AND SHUT UP! SIT DOWN SOMEPLACE... THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU'RE GOING TO ANSWER!

OH, MRS. ZANDER. LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED... WHAT? H-HE DID? Y-YOU JUST FOUND THE BODY THIS MINUTE? B-BUT... OF COURSE I'LL ANNOUNCE IT AS AN ACCIDENT...


ZANDER IS DEAD! THEY FOUND HIS BODY AT 12-10... YET YOU ANNOUNCED HIS SUICIDE AT LEAST TWO MINUTES BEFORE THAT!

MISTER.. YOU DIDN'T WANDER IN HERE ACCIDENTALLY!
YOU'RE RIGHT... I DID HAVE A REASON FOR COMING TO STUDIO X!
I MEANT TO GIVE THIS TO YOU IMMEDIATELY BUT THINGS HAVE BEEN HAPPENING SO FAST...
WHAT IS IT?
YOUR HOUSE WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE LESS THAN A HALF-HOUR AGO...
H- HOUSE DESTROYED BY FIRE...? B-BUT MY WIFE.... T-THE BABY...
"...JEAN...CRITICAL CONDITION! AND THE BABY... ALMOST NO HOPE FOR HER SURVIVAL!" G-GOTTA GET OVER TO MERCY HOSPITAL!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, DON? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST!
GOT TO GET OVER TO MERCY HOSPITAL AS SOON AS I CAN! YOU TAKE OVER...
T-THERE MUST BE AN EXPLANATION FOR ALL THIS
I'M SURE EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT ALL RIGHT!
STICK AROUND, STRANGER! WHEN I GET BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL... YOU'LL TELL ME WHAT THIS WHOLE WEIRD EVENING IS ABOUT OR ELSE
YES, MR CREIGHTON. WHATEVER YOU SAY!
5

NO SOONER HAD FRIGHTENED DON CREIGHTON FLED FROM STUDIO X THAN THE STRANGER LEANED FORWARD...
WE INTERRUPT THE DON CREIGHTON NIGHT-OWL PROGRAM TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF TRAGIC IMPORTANCE! AT EXACTLY 12:15 THIS EVENING, IN FRONT OF THE WBOR BROADCASTING STUDIOS, TWO VEHICLES COLLIDED IN AN ACCIDENT WHICH COULD BE HEARD FOR BLOCKS AROUND!
WE ANNOUNCE THE DEATH, IN THAT ACCIDENT, OF AN ENTERTAINER ON THE NIGHT-OWL PROGRAM, MR DON CREIGHTON! HE WAS KILLED AT PRECISELY 12 15 THIS EVENING!
D-DON. DEAD!' IT CAN'T BE! IT'S ONLY 12:14 NOW.. AND HE SAID 12:15! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE AND YET..
OOOO
I-IT'S OLD MIKE. ALL RIGHT' MUST HAVE TOPPLED DOWN THE STAIRS AND BROKEN HIS NECK!
HAPPENED AROUND MIDNIGHT AS CLOSE AS WE CAN FIGURE'
HEAR ABOUT OLD MAN ZANDER? CLOSED HIS GARAGE DOORS, TURNED ON H S CAR MOTOR AND WENT TO SLEEP! HAPPENED JUST A COUPLA MINUTES AFTER MIDNIGHT FROM WHAT I HEAR STRANGEST THING I EVER RUN ACROSS!
LOOKED LIKE DON CREIGHTON TEARING OUT OF THE BUILDING JUST NOW, DIDN'T IT?
DON JUST FOUND OUT THAT HIS HOUSE BURNED DOWN AND THAT HIS WIFE AND KID ARE BADLY BURNED'
6

BOOM!
SEE THAT CAR COME WHIPPING AROUND THE CORNER? MUST HAVE BEEN DOING SEVENTY!
GUY JUST STEPPED OFF THE CURB, TOO! HE'S SMASHED UP SO BAD YOU CAN HARDLY RECOGNIZE 'IM!
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SO GRUESOME IN MY LIFE! SOMEBODY CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE .. NOT THAT IT'S GOING TO DO THIS POOR GUY ANY GOOD ANYMORE!
HERE'S THE GUY'S WALLET LET'S SEE IF IT TELLS WHO HE WAS! HMMM HERE'S AN IDENTITY CARD DONALD M. GREIGHTON.
GREIGHTON. ? S-SAY.. HE'S THE GUY WHO RUNS THAT DISK JOCKEY PROGRAM RIGHT DOWN THE STREET AT WBOR! FUNNY THING HIS PROGRAM WAS ALL QUEERED UP TONIGHT...
NO SOONER DID HE SAY "IT IS NOW MIDNIGHT" THAN EVERYTHING SEEMED TO GO HAYWIRE! VOICES SORT OF ARGUING IN THE BACKGROUND RUNNING FEET...THE WEIRDEST THING YOU EVER HEARD! AND STRANGEST OF ALL SOMEONE ANNOUNCED GREIGHTON'S OWN DEATH A COUPLA MINUTES BEFORE IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!
ALL RIGHT, BOYS...LET'S MOVE THE POOR LUG OUT OF THE GUTTER AND UP ON THE SIDEWALK, UNTIL THE AMBULANCE GETS HERE!
IF ANYONE HAD NOTICED, A MAN WITH THICK-LENSED GLASSES TURNED AND WALKED SLOWLY DOWN THE STREET AT THAT MOMENT
LISTEN TO STATION WBOR
...THE LAST TIME ANYONE FROM STATION WBOR IS KNOWN TO HAVE SEEN "THE STRANGER IN STUDIO X!"
THE END

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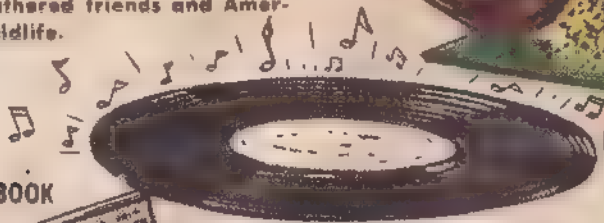

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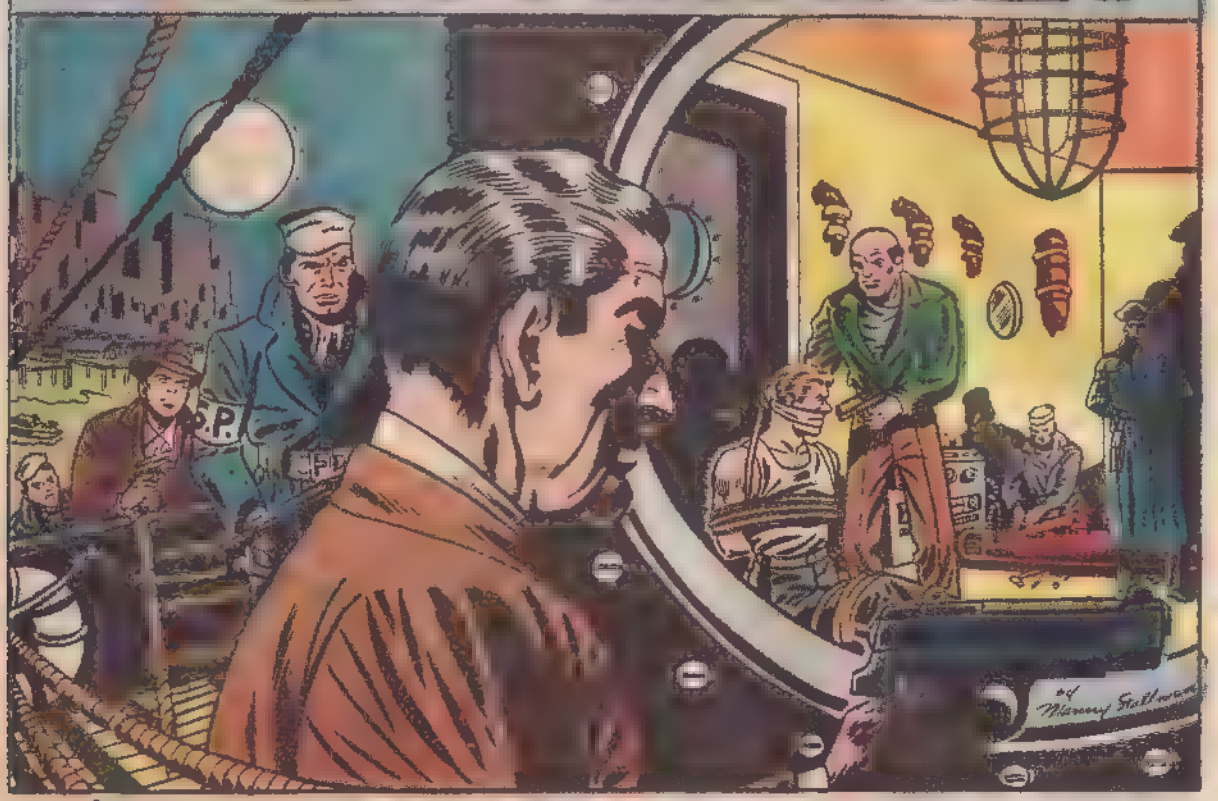
☐ Send C.O.D. I will pay postman $1.69 upon delivery plus a few cents postage

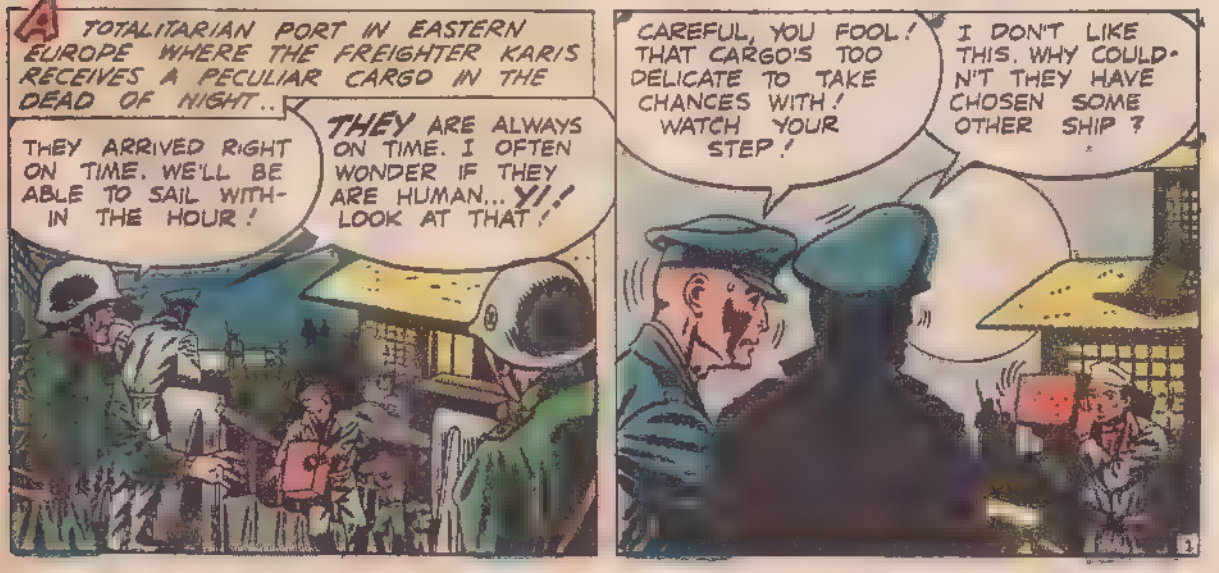
NAME _____

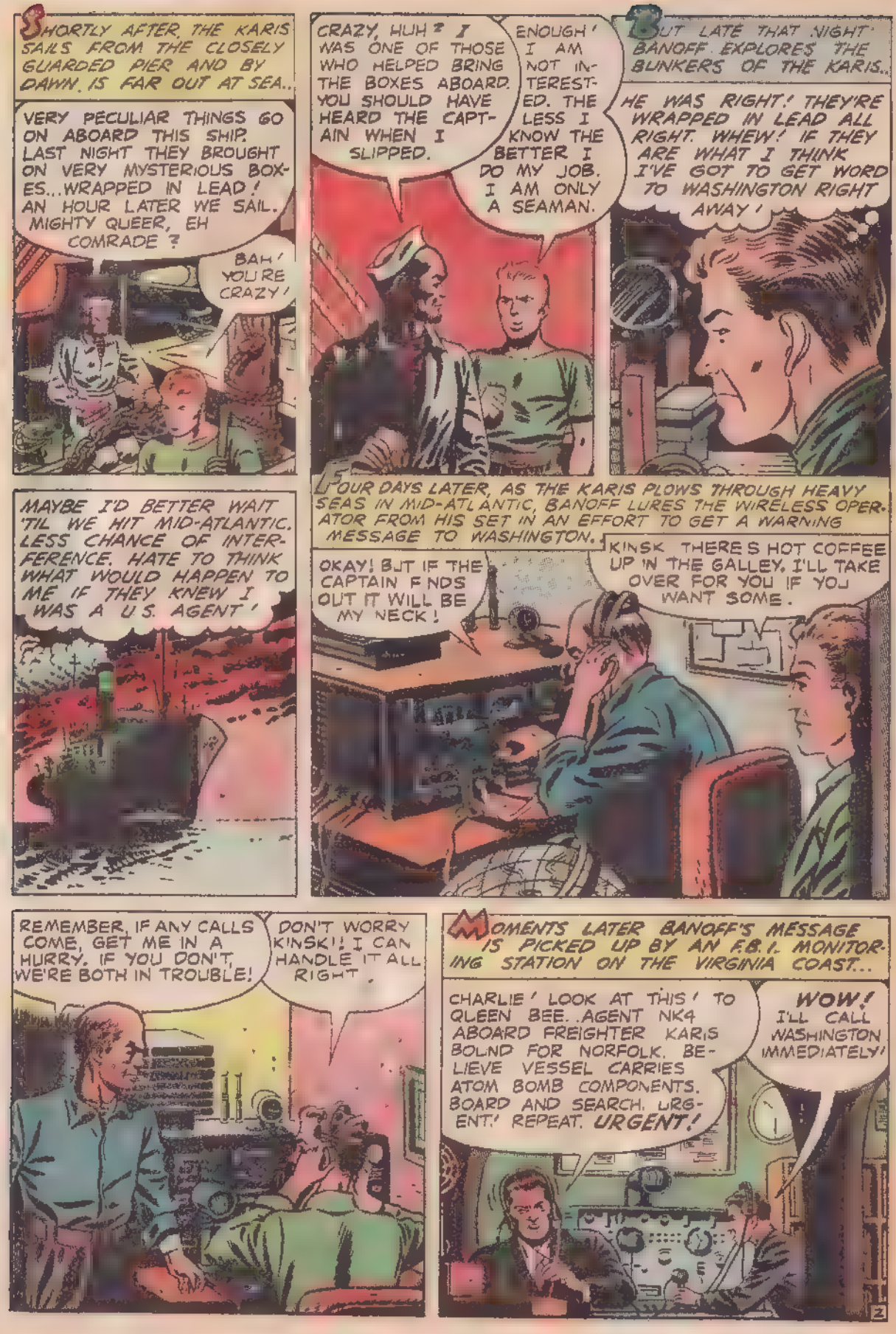
ADDRESS _____

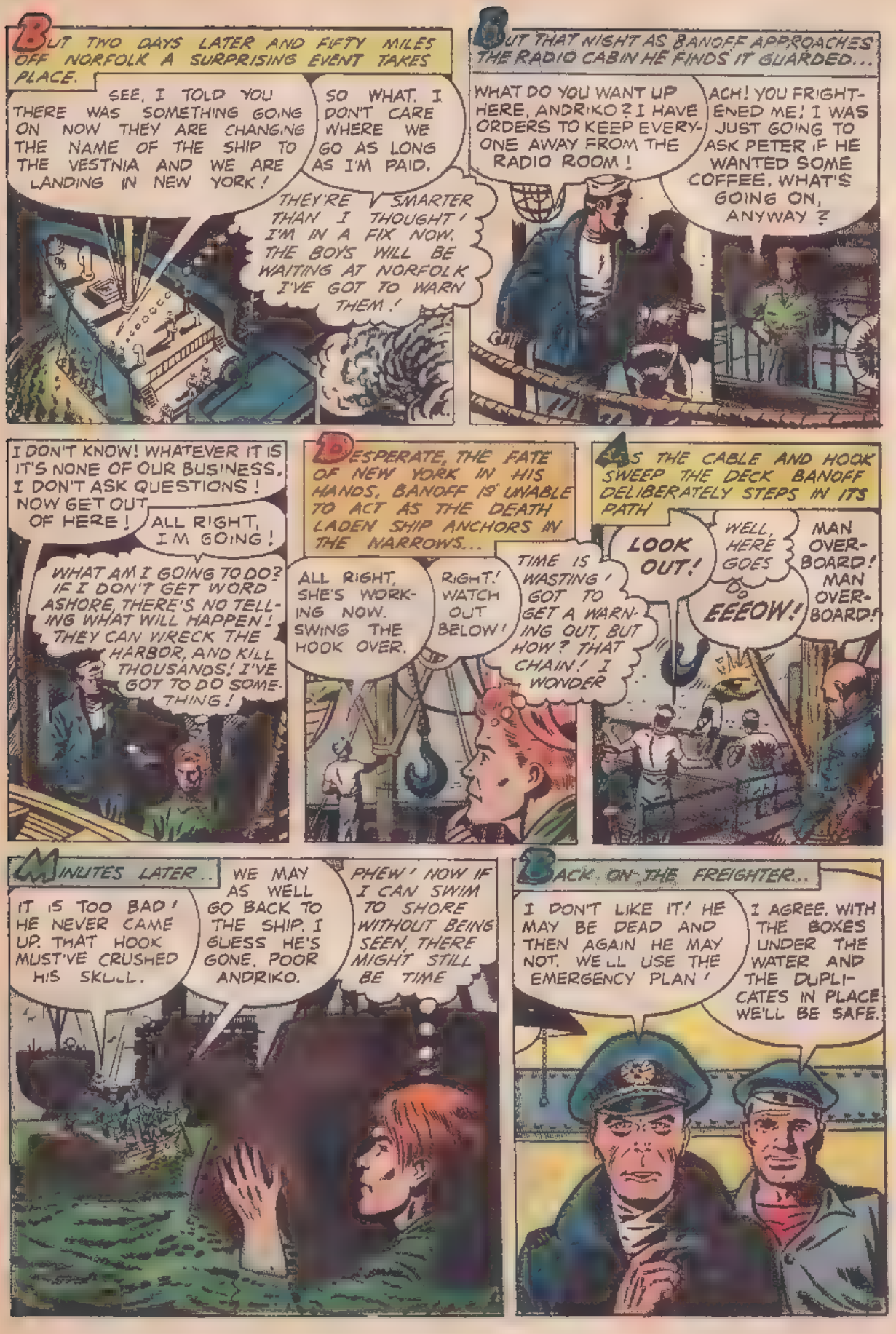
NIGHTMARE!



IN THEIR GREED FOR *POWER* SOME NATIONS MIGHT GO TO *ANY* LENGTH TO DESTROY THOSE WHO STAND IN THEIR WAY TO ACHIEVE *WORLD DOMINATION*. NOW THAT THE SECRET OF THE *ATOM BOMB* IS KNOWN TO OTHERS, THE UNITED STATES MUST BE DOUBLY CAREFUL OF ATTACK WITH ITS *OWN* WEAPON. U.S. AGENT *ANDRIKO BANOFF* HELD THE KNOWLEDGE OF JUST SUCH AN *ATTACK*. ON HIM RESTED THE FATE OF *THOUSANDS* OF LIVES AND THE *DESTRUCTION* OF NEW YORK HARBOR.


A TOTALITARIAN PORT IN EASTERN EUROPE WHERE THE FREIGHTER KARIS RECEIVES A PECULIAR CARGO IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT..
THEY ARRIVED RIGHT ON TIME. WE'LL BE ABLE TO SAIL WITHIN THE HOUR!
THEY ARE ALWAYS ON TIME. I OFTEN WONDER IF THEY ARE HUMAN... YI! LOOK AT THAT!
CAREFUL, YOU FOOL! THAT CARGO'S TOO DELICATE TO TAKE CHANCES WITH! WATCH YOUR STEP!
I DON'T LIKE THIS. WHY COULDN'T THEY HAVE CHOSEN SOME OTHER SHIP?
1


SHORTLY AFTER THE KARIS SAILS FROM THE CLOSELY GUARDED PIER AND BY DAWN, IS FAR OUT AT SEA..
VERY PECULIAR THINGS GO ON ABOARD THIS SHIP. LAST NIGHT THEY BROUGHT ON VERY MYSTERIOUS BOXES...WRAPPED IN LEAD! AN HOUR LATER WE SAIL. MIGHTY QUEER, EH COMRADE?
BAH! YOU'RE CRAZY!
CRAZY, HUH? I WAS ONE OF THOSE WHO HELPED BRING THE BOXES ABOARD. YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD THE CAPTAIN WHEN I SLIPPED.
ENOUGH! I AM NOT INTERESTED. THE LESS I KNOW THE BETTER I DO MY JOB. I AM ONLY A SEAMAN.
BUT LATE THAT NIGHT BANOFF EXPLORES THE BUNKERS OF THE KARIS..
HE WAS RIGHT! THEY'RE WRAPPED IN LEAD ALL RIGHT. WHEW! IF THEY ARE WHAT I THINK I'VE GOT TO GET WORD TO WASHINGTON RIGHT AWAY!
MAYBE I'D BETTER WAIT 'TIL WE HIT MID-ATLANTIC. LESS CHANCE OF INTERFERENCE. HATE TO THINK WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO ME IF THEY KNEW I WAS A U.S. AGENT!
FOUR DAYS LATER, AS THE KARIS PLOWS THROUGH HEAVY SEAS IN MID-ATLANTIC, BANOFF LURES THE WIRELESS OPERATOR FROM HIS SET IN AN EFFORT TO GET A WARNING MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON.
OKAY! BUT IF THE CAPTAIN FINDS OUT IT WILL BE MY NECK!
KINSK THERE'S HOT COFFEE UP IN THE GALLEY. I'LL TAKE OVER FOR YOU IF YOU WANT SOME.
REMEMBER, IF ANY CALLS COME, GET ME IN A HURRY. IF YOU DON'T, WE'RE BOTH IN TROUBLE!
DON'T WORRY KINSK! I CAN HANDLE IT ALL RIGHT.
MOMENTS LATER BANOFF'S MESSAGE IS PICKED UP BY AN F.B.I. MONITORING STATION ON THE VIRGINIA COAST...
CHARLIE! LOOK AT THIS! TO QUEEN BEE..AGENT NK4 ABOARD FREIGHTER KARIS BOUND FOR NORFOLK. BELIEVE VESSEL CARRIES ATOM BOMB COMPONENTS. BOARD AND SEARCH. URGENT! REPEAT. URGENT!
WOW! I'LL CALL WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY!
2


But two days later and fifty miles off Norfolk a surprising event takes place.
See, I told you there was something going on now they are changing the name of the ship to the Vestnia and we are landing in New York!
So what. I don't care where we go as long as I'm paid.
They're smarter than I thought! I'm in a fix now. The boys will be waiting at Norfolk I've got to warn them!
But that night as Banoff approaches the radio cabin he finds it guarded...
What do you want up here, Andriko? I have orders to keep everyone away from the radio room!
Ach! You frightened me! I was just going to ask Peter if he wanted some coffee. What's going on, anyway?
I don't know! Whatever it is it's none of our business. I don't ask questions! Now get out of here!
All right, I'm going!
What am I going to do? If I don't get word ashore, there's no telling what will happen! They can wreck the harbor, and kill thousands! I've got to do something!
Desperate, the fate of New York in his hands, Banoff is unable to act as the death laden ship anchors in the narrows...
All right, she's working now. Swing the hook over.
Right! Watch out below!
Time is wasting! Got to get a warning out, but how? That chain! I wonder
As the cable and hook sweep the deck Banoff deliberately steps in its path
Look out!
Well, here goes
Eeeow!
Man overboard! Man overboard!
Minutes later..
It is too bad! He never came up. That hook must've crushed his skull.
We may as well go back to the ship. I guess he's gone. Poor Andriko.
Phew! Now if I can swim to shore without being seen, there might still be time
Back on the freighter...
I don't like it! He may be dead and then again he may not. We'll use the emergency plan!
I agree. With the boxes under the water and the duplicates in place we'll be safe.

SEE THAT THEY ARE PUT OVER IMMEDIATELY. UNDER THAT BUOY OUT THERE WOULD BE A GOOD SPOT. MAKE SURE THAT THE NORFOLK PAPERS ARE BURNED AND THE NEW ONES IN ORDER.
I'VE ALREADY DONE SO. AS SOON AS THE BOXES ARE REPLACED WE'LL BE READY FOR ANYONE!
MEANWHILE, IN THE N.Y. OFFICES OF THE F.B.I.
THEY COVERED THEMSELVES FROM EVERY ANGLE. WE'VE GOT TO STOP THEM NOW!
WE'VE NOTIFIED THE HARBOR POLICE AND ALERTED EVERY PORT CITY TO SEARCH ALL SHIPS! YOU'D BETTER GET SOME REST. THAT WAS A ROUGH SWIM.
I FEEL FINE. I WOULDN'T MISS BEING IN ON THE KILL FOR ANYTHING!
YOU CAN COME, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY ON THE DOCK. DON'T WANT THEM TO RECOGNIZE YOU.
SOMETIME LATER HARBOR POLICE AND F.B.I. AGENTS SWARM ABOARD THE FREIGHTER..
THIS SHIP IS IMPOUNDED. WE ARE SEARCHING HER FOR CONTRABAND.
CONTRABAND! MY DEAR SIR, WE ARE JUST AN ORDINARY FREIGHTER. YOU ARE MISTAKEN, BUT AS YOU WISH. THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN.
I ASSURE YOU, YOU WILL FIND NOTHING. WE DO NOT DEAL IN SMUGGLING.
THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN... MAKE IT THOROUGH, BOYS.
THE SEARCHING PARTY DISCOVERS THE DUPLICATE LEAD-COVERED BOXES.
CHIEF! QUICK! I THINK WE'VE FOUND IT!
WAIT! DON'T TOUCH THAT!
STEP ASIDE, CAPTAIN, WE'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT'S IN THOSE!
PLEASE! PLEASE! GENTLEMEN, NO! THESE BOXES CONTAIN VERY DELICATE SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS THAT WILL BE RUINED BY THE SLIGHTEST CONTACT WITH RADIOACTIVITY. I BEG YOU NOT TO OPEN THEM!
I'D LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT. MOVE HIM OUT OF THERE BOYS.

STOP! I TELL THE TRUTH! YOU WILL BE SORRY IF YOU OPEN THEM!
NEVER MIND HIM, BOYS, OPEN THEM!
THE BOXES ARE OPENED AND THE EMBARRASSED AGENTS FIND EXACTLY WHAT THE CAPTAIN SAID THEY WOULD FIND. SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS
I GUESS WE PULLED A BONER, CHIEF. THE REST OF THE SHIP IS CLEAN AS A WHISTLE.
I'M SORRY, CAPTAIN, BUT ORDERS ARE ORDERS. I HAD TO DO IT.
YOU WILL REGRET THIS, SIR. MY CONSUL WILL HEAR OF THIS AFFAIR AND I WILL HAVE SATISFACTION!
ALL RIGHT, MEN, GUESS IT WAS A FALSE ALARM. LET'S GO.. ONCE MORE, CAPTAIN, MAY I SAY I AM SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE YOU HAVE BEEN PUT TO.
YOU HAVE NOT HEARD THE END OF THIS. IF THOSE INSTRUMENTS ARE DAMAGED, YOU WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE!
IF HE'S STILL ALIVE!
ON SHORE BANOFF GETS THE BAD NEWS.
YOU PUT US ON A SPOT, BANOFF. THOSE BOXES HELD SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS. THE CAPTAIN'S GOING TO STIR UP A MESS OVER THIS
SOMETHING'S WRONG. THEY DON'T CHANGE SHIP NAMES AND DESTINATIONS JUST TO BRING IN SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS. THEY'RE HIDING SOMETHING!
COULD BE, BUT THE BOAT'S IN THE CLEAR. NOTHING WE CAN DO. COMING?
NO... I'M STICKING AROUND. SOMETHING MIGHT TURN UP. I'LL SEE YOU LATER, CHIEF.
ABOARD SHIP...
HA-HA-HO-HO! LOOK AT THE FOOLS GO! I'M GLAD THIS HAPPENED NOW WE ARE THE INJURED INNOCENT THEY WON'T EVEN WATCH US NOW. SEND OUT THE LAUNCH FOR THE REAL BOXES!
YES, SIR THE STUPID OXEN WERE COMPLETELY FOOLED. OUR SUPERIORS NEVER LEAVE A LOOSE THREAD, EVERYTHING IS THOUGHT OF!
FROM A HIDDEN SPOT ON THE DOCK, BANOFF SEES THE LAUNCH GO AND RETURN WITH THE REAL BOXES...
HA, I KNEW IT WAS A FAKE THEY HAD THE REAL BOXES IN THE HARBOR, I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING
5

SECONDS LATER
I MUST FIND OUT WHAT THEY PLAN TO DO. PERHAPS THEY WANT TO SHIP THE BOMB INLAND OR PLANT IT IN THE CITY.
ON THE FREIGHTER, BANOFF SPIES THROUGH THE CABIN WINDOW AS A SINISTER FIGURE CREEPS UP BEHIND HIM..
HOLY SMOKE, THEY'RE PUTTING IT TOGETHER RIGHT IN THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN. THEY MUST PLAN TO BLOW THE SHIP UP WITH THE BOMB AND THE HARBOR WITH IT.
I WONDER IF THERE IS STILL TIME TO GET THE F.B.... UNHH!!
A SPY! THE CAPTAIN WILL BE PLEASED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU... YII! IT'S BANOFF!
WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNS BANOFF FINDS HIMSELF INSIDE THE CABIN WITNESSING AN AMAZING SCENE..
OHH, MY HEAD.. MUST STOP HIM... FLARE GUNS!... IF I COULD HIT THE TRIGGER MECHANISM..
SO, BANOFF, YOU ARE THE ONE WHO GAVE AWAY OUR SECRET. PRETTY CLEVER, BUT UNFORTUNATELY NOT CLEVER ENOUGH, DOG! STAND UP WHEN I TALK TO YOU!
WELL, TRAITOROUS SNAKE, WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY FOR YOURSELF? SPEAK UP!.. AYYEE! STOP!!
THIS, CAPTAIN, THAT WHILE I'M ALIVE YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH YOUR HORRIBLE SCHEME!
SHOOT HIM!
STOP HIM! STOP HIM! IF THAT HITS THE BOMB..
ALL RIGHT, BANOFF, YOU'VE HAD YOUR FLING!
DO NOT FEAR, CAPTAIN, THE BOMB CAN ONLY BE SET OFF BY THE TRIGGER MECHANISM!
UNHH!
WAIT..DON'T SHOOT! DO YOU WANT THE SHIP SWARMING WITH POLICE! THE BOMB WILL ERADICATE HIM MORE COMPLETELY, HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE ANOTHER TRIGGER?
NOT OVER THIRTY MINUTES, CAPTAIN. IT IS NO GREAT LOSS. JUST A SHORT DELAY.

GOOD. WE MUST REACH THE BOAT THAT IS GOING TO PICK US UP BEFORE MORNING OR THEY WILL LEAVE. THEY'RE AT THE OTHER END OF STATEN ISLAND...NOW TIE HIM UP AND GAG HIM. I WANT NO SLIP-UPS THIS TIME.

DON'T WORRY, I'LL SEE TO THAT!

BOUND AND HELPLESS BANOFF WATCHES IN HORROR AS THE TRIGGER IS REBUILT...

I'M A BUNGLING FOOL...THAT BOMB WILL KILL THOUSANDS, WRECK THE CITY. IF I COULD ONLY DO SOMETHING...

AS THE MINUTES TICK BY AND THE JOB NEARS COMPLETION BANOFF SINKS INTO A MORASS OF DISPAIR...THEN SUDDENLY AT THE DOOR AND PORTHOLES...

THE CHIEF AND HIS MEN! THANK GOD...

ALL RIGHT, RAISE THEM, AND HIGH! DETACH THAT TRIGGER QUICK AND ONE OF YOU RELEASE BANOFF!

NO! NO! IT CANNOT BE!

IT IS HIS FAULT! I'LL KILL... AAGGH!

ANYONE ELSE WANT A SLUG? JUST START MOVING!

THANK GOD, YOU GOT HERE! I WAS SURE IT WAS ALL OVER. I THOUGHT THOSE RATS HAD YOU BUFFALOED.

SORRY YOU HAD TO BE SCARED THAT WAY, BANOFF, BUT I WANTED TO GET THEM WITH THE GOODS. I WANTED THEM TO BRING OUT THE REAL STUFF!

IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE AS LONG AS YOU GOT HERE.

TAKE 'EM AWAY, BOYS. WE'D BETTER NOT TOUCH THIS BABY TILL WE GET SOME ATOMIC EXPERTS HERE TO LOOK IT OVER. I'LL HAVE THE DOCK SEALED OFF.

IF THAT THING HAD GONE OFF THE DAMAGE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ESTIMATED. THE PUBLIC MUST NEVER KNOW HOW CLOSE THEY CAME TO SUDDEN DEATH!

SOME WEEKS LATER IN WASHINGTON...

ANDRIKO BANOFF, WE PRESENT YOU WITH THIS MEDAL AS A TOKEN OF ESTEEM FROM A GRATEFUL COUNTRY. YOUR DEED WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY!

THANK YOU, SIR!

THUS ENDED AN EVIL ATTEMPT THAT MIGHT HAVE WRECKED EVERY PORT IN THE U.S. IN THE SWIFT RAIDS THAT FOLLOWED TWELVE MORE BOMBS WERE UNCOVERED AND THE HORRIBLE THREAT OF ATOMIC DESTRUCTION WAS ENDED BY THE ALERTNESS AND RESOURCEFULNESS OF AGENT NK4, ANDRIKO BANOFF.....

THE END

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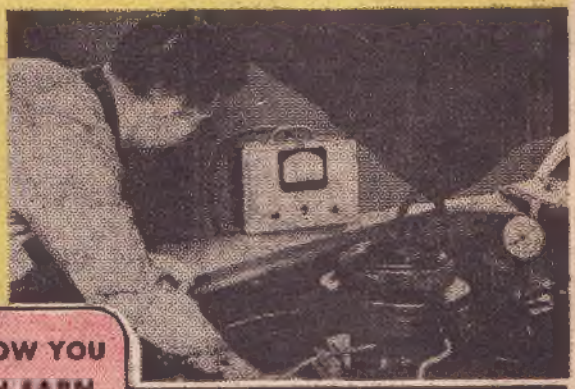

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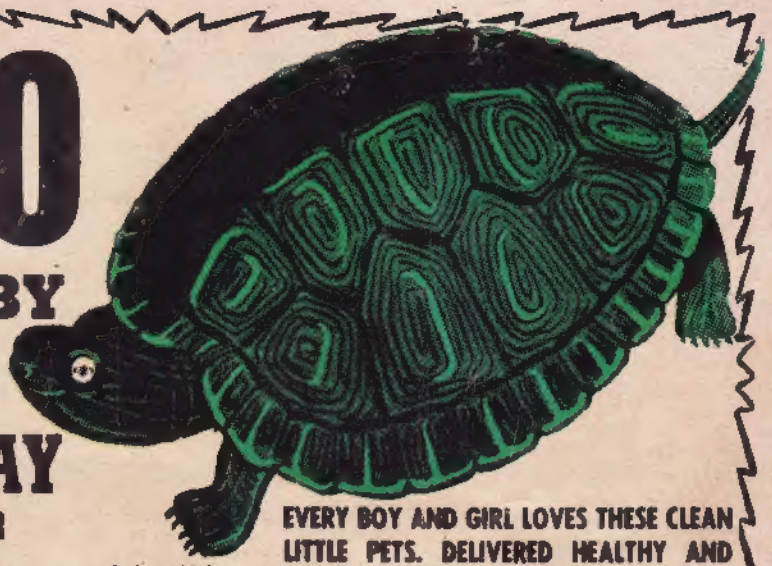

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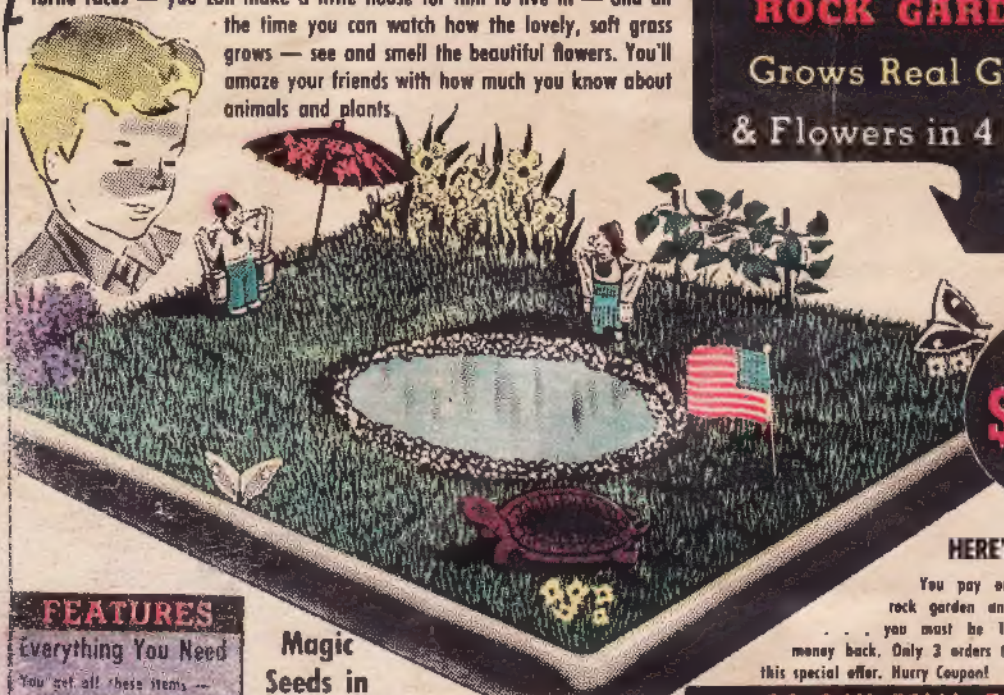

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